

REMARKS

This Amendment is submitted preliminary to the issuance of an Office Action in the present application and in response to the Official Action of January 13, 2003.

Record is also made of a telephone interview between applicants' representative and the Examiner which took place on April 22, 2003. The Examiner is thanked for her help and assistance as well as for the courtesies extended to Counsel at that time. During the course of the interview, the present application was extensively discussed in light of the final rejection of claims 1-6 and 8-22. More specifically, applicants' representative proposed to amend claim 1 by setting forth that the stiffening elements are made of metal and form partition walls between two of the inner chambers. In addition, applicants' representative pointed out that in connection with the prior art to Nimmrichter, the element (25) does not constitute a stiffening element, as set forth in claim 1 of the present invention, but rather relates to a barrier foil that has, in fact, the opposite effect as a stiffening element because its sole purpose is to reduce heat loss, as described in col. 2, lines 41 to 45. For the benefit of the Examiner, applicants' representative provides a translation of this passage:

Furthermore, this arrangement of the barrier foil effects a subdivision of the respective chambers of the plastic profile, so that advantageously heat losses as a result of heat convection or heat conduction can be reduced.

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Nimmrichter further states in col. 9, lines 17 to 24 as follows:

In the event the barrier foil 25 extends respectively only between two opposite support webs 18, 19, or between a support web 18 or 19 and a transverse sidewall 11, 12 within a single chamber 20 or 22, the respective support webs 18, 19 or the transverse sidewalls 11, 12 should not be entirely severed by the barrier foil 25 in order to not adversely affect the static of the hollow profile 1.

Clearly, the provision of the barrier foil poses a problem as far as the overall stability of the hollow profile is concerned. Please note also that Nimmrichter describes the arrangement of a separate reinforcement profile (23). In this regard, Nimmrichter states in col. 8, lines 26 to 29 as follows:

Preferably disposed in a central chamber 21 is a reinforcement profile 23 for increase of the static values such as, e.g., torsional stiffness, flexing strength etc.

The Examiner indicated during the interview that the proposed changes to claim 1 would appear to overcome the Nimmrichter reference. However, in order to make a final determination about patentability of independent claim 1, the Examiner will provide a translation to verify the function of elements 25.

As a result of the interview, applicant now submits amendments to claim 1, as proposed at the interview. Please note that the reference to "plastic" in the preamble has been deleted and set forth in the main body of the claim to clarify

that the frame section is made of plastic whereas the stiffening elements are made of metal. In addition, applicants have amended claims 2, 5-14, 18-22 to make them consistent with the changes to claim 1. Claims 3, 4, 7, 15-17 are canceled.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is considered patentably differentiated over the prior art of record and believed to be in immediate conditions for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance of the present application are thus respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner consider necessary or desirable any formal changes anywhere in the specification, claims and/or drawing, then it is respectfully requested that such changes be made by Examiner's Amendment, if the Examiner feels this would facilitate passage of the case to issuance. If the Examiner feels that it might be helpful in advancing this case by calling the undersigned, applicant would greatly appreciate such a telephone interview.

Respectfully submitted,

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